

RETIREMENT OF CHIEF DOMBECK

• Mr. BINGAMAN. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize and thank Forest Service Chief Michael Dombeck. He served as Chief for four years, beginning in 1997 until his retirement from Federal service last week.

During his tenure, Chief Dombeck was a good friend to New Mexico. His assistance was critical in crafting the Community Forest Restoration Act. Enacted into law last year, this program provides grants to New Mexico communities to team up with the Forest Service to reduce hazardous fuels in and near national forests. I believe this program will set a good precedent for communities and Federal land management agencies to work in a collaborative manner to take care of our forests.

Chief Dombeck also quadrupled the budget for the Youth Conservation Corps, "YCC". YCC programs provide extraordinary benefits to both our youth and our natural resources. Through YCC, desperately needed restoration work is completed on our public lands. At the same time, young people, particularly those living in rural communities in New Mexico and throughout the West, engage in meaningful summer employment and gain new skills. This program also promotes collaboration between communities and Federal land managers.

Thanks in large part to his efforts and support, YCC is now one of the programs eligible for funding set aside by Title VIII of last year's Interior Appropriations Act, referred to as the "Land Conservation, Preservation and Infrastructure Improvement" account.

Last year, Chief Dombeck provided invaluable expertise as Senator DOMENICI and I worked to provide relief to communities at high risk from wildfire that are located in the vicinity of Federal lands. Specifically, he assisted us in targeting additional hazardous fuel reduction funds near these communities to reduce the threat of fire. In addition, he supported our plans to create employment opportunities in these communities. To accomplish this objective, we provided new authority for the land management agencies to give a preference to local people and YCC work crews when awarding contracts and agreements to complete the projects and conduct monitoring.

I commend Chief Dombeck for his efforts to both sustain community well-being and enhance the ecological integrity of the national forest system. I wish him well as he embarks on a new chapter in his life.●

RECOGNIZING THE WORK OF DR. THOMAS E. STARZL

• Mr. SANTORUM. Mr. President, it is my privilege to rise today to recognize the accomplishments of a living legend. Transplant pioneer Thomas E. Starzl performed the world's first liver transplant in 1963 and the first success-

ful series of kidney transplants between 1963 and 1964, and he has for four decades continued to make equally extraordinary advancements in the field of organ transplantation.

This coming April 27, Dr. Starzl's former students and colleagues, representing the span of those 40 years, will pay tribute to Dr. Starzl as he enters emeritus status at the University of Pittsburgh. It will be a celebration much to Dr. Starzl's liking—an academic gathering in order to share important scientific information.

Dr. Starzl is a pioneer. His work has had lasting influence and utility in the field of transplantation and on other fields of medicine as well. His legacy has and will continue to make an impact on us all.

In 1980 he developed a combination of drugs that transformed transplantation of the liver and heart from an experimental procedure to a standard treatment for patients with end-stage organ failure. In 1989, his development of another drug markedly improved survival rates for all kinds of transplants and made possible for the first time successful transplantation of the small intestine.

When Pittsburgh welcomed him 20 years ago, we had no idea the incredible contributions this man would make to medicine and mankind. Indeed, the city has enjoyed an enhanced reputation because he chose to make the University of Pittsburgh his academic home. This year marks the 20th anniversary of the first liver transplant he performed in Pittsburgh. Since then, surgeons at the University of Pittsburgh and the UPMC Health System have performed nearly 6,000 liver transplants and more than 11,300 transplants of all organs. These numbers set the world standard, by far.

But Dr. Starzl's work goes far beyond Pittsburgh—he is truly a national treasure. He is one of history's greatest surgeons, someone who made saving a life routine. Even patients who have not been under his direct care have benefitted from his work. In fact, most of the world's transplant surgeons and physicians have been trained by Dr. Starzl or by those trained by him. By this standard alone his impact is immeasurable and permanent. He has forever changed and improved health care delivery as we know it.

Dr. Starzl, please know that every American is indebted to you for your hard work, your refusal to take no for an answer, and most of all, for your genius and skill as a surgeon and a researcher. The world is a better place because you chose to make Pittsburgh your home.●

HONORING BILL RADIGAN

• Mr. JOHNSON. Mr. President, I am saddened to report the passing of one of South Dakota's most exceptional public leaders, and a life-long friend in my home town of Vermillion, SD. Bill

Radigan led a full life, committed to his family, his nation and his community.

Bill answered America's call to the military during World War II as a member of the Army Air Corps. He served the Vermillion region during his 35 years with the U.S. Postal Service, while simultaneously coordinating Vermillion's school bus system. He served as secretary of the South Dakota teener baseball program for over 30 years and provided needed leadership through the American Legion and VFW. Bill was secretary-treasurer of the Vermillion Volunteer Fire Department for 55 years, and served as city councilman and mayor of Vermillion, where he oversaw the development of progressive new projects in our home town.

I had the privilege of working with Bill on issues ranging from veterans' benefits to the Vermillion-Newcastle Bridge, which will span the Missouri River by the end of this summer. But for all of Bill Radigan's commitment to public service, nothing was more important in his life than his family. He and his wife Susie made a dynamic pair in our community, and their 11 children and many grandchildren were of utmost importance to them. Bill's national, State, and community leadership achievements were extraordinary, but the strong family values he and Susie lived out every day of their marriage serves as well as an inspiration for all.

I had the privilege of attending Bill's funeral this past week, and the outpouring of love and respect from the entire community was extraordinary. Our Nation and South Dakota are far better places because of Bill's life, and while we miss him very much, the best way to honor his life is to emulate his commitment to public service and family.●

HAPPY BIRTHDAY, MARY SAMSON LEFEVRE

• Mr. ROCKEFELLER. Mr. President, today is a special day in our office. We are joining our science fellow, Russ Lefevre, in celebrating the 99th birthday of his mother, Mary Samson Lefevre. She was born on April 4, 1902 and lived on a farm in North Dakota for her early years. Her parents were second generation French-Canadian immigrants, and she was one of eight children. She went to grade school at a Catholic elementary school in a small farming community but dropped out of school after the 8th grade to help on her parents' farm.

She married Ernest Lefevre in 1934. They lived in a small town in North Dakota. She worked most of her life in a bakery, retiring at age 74. Mrs. Lefevre lives in a care center in Maplewood, MN near her daughter. She is in good health and good spirits, as she participates in the many activities in the center. She continues her interest in national affairs.